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Monitoring & Evaluation of the Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium (SDC-GPWI)

REPORT 2 - West Africa Mission Report

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Consultancies for Development

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List of abbreviations

CACH	Caritas Switzerland
CHAST	Children's Hygiene and Sanitation Training
CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation
COOF	Coordination Office SDC
F2F	Face to face
FCFA (currency)	Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine (1CHF ≈ 530 FCFA)
GPWI	Global Programme Water Initiatives / SDC
HEKS	Swiss Inter-church Aid
HSI	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PHAST	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation
PMU	Project Management Unit
RWA	Regional Water Advisors
SanPlat	Sanitation Platform
SCO	Swiss Coordination Office
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SRC	Swiss Red-Cross
SWP	Swiss Water Partnership
Tdh	Terre des hommes Foundation
WA	West Africa
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

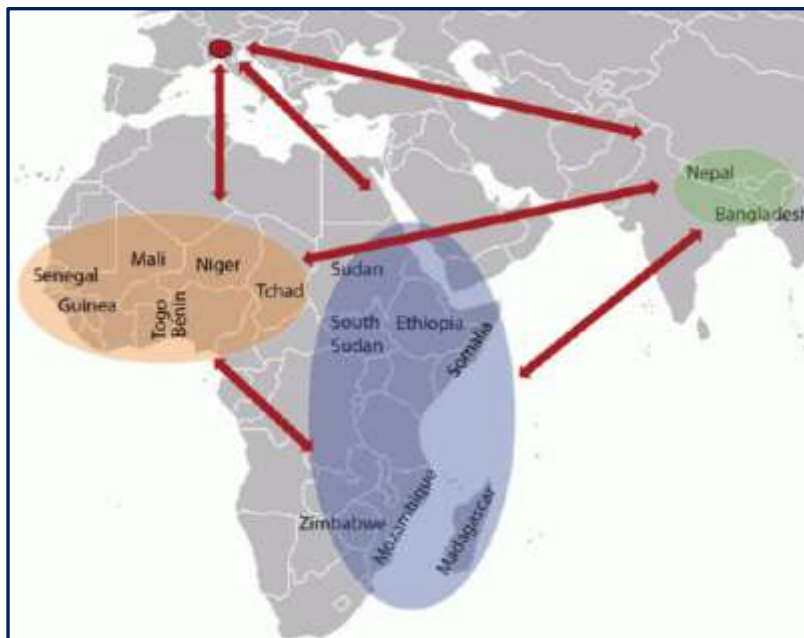
The Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium is a programme jointly developed by 8 Swiss NGOs (Fastenopfer, Solidar Suisse, Swissaid, Terre des hommes foundation, Swiss Red Cross, HEKS, Caritas Switzerland and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation) within the framework of the 0.5% Message approved by the Swiss Parliament in February 2011. The programme aims at increasing access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation as well as improving the efficiency of family farmers in rural areas and small towns of countries lagging far behind the MDG targets for water and sanitation. To achieve this, the capacity of key local actors to manage water, sanitation and irrigation services are strengthened so that access to these services can be sustained. The expected results have been defined as follows:

Increasing access to water, sanitation and irrigation services:

- ▶ 305'000 persons in rural areas gain access to clean drinking water and 150'000 to sanitation
- ▶ 40'000 farmers gain access to clean water and low-cost irrigation systems
- ▶ 132 schools (40'000 pupils) and 51 health centres (330'000 patients yearly) are equipped with water and sanitation infrastructures
- ▶ 85 "blue schools" (18'500 pupils) are implemented, schools that comprise access to safe drinking water, separate toilets for girls and boys, school garden with low-cost irrigation, courses on environment and hygiene promotion

Increasing capacity: The key actors are effectively trained and engaged in sustainable management of the water, sanitation and irrigation services

The Consortium programme was launched mid-August 2011 for a period until end of 2013 with a total budget of CHF 18 million – CHF 13.8 million (or 77%) are financed by SDC (GPWI) whereas the reminder is composed of the NGO's own funds. In 16 countries, the Consortium organisations implement 27 projects having been designed as extensions or scaling-up initiatives of on-going projects. Besides the Project Management Unit (PMU) in Switzerland, the



consortium employs three Regional Water Advisors (RWA) based in Bamako (West Africa region), Nairobi (East Africa region) and Kathmandu (South Asia region).

The expected added value of this innovative Consortium approach is the sharing of resources and know-how between the NGOs as well as the synergies created increasing the success of the scaling up of innovative approaches and best practices. Regarding their positioning, the Swiss NGOs can collectively and individually increase their visibility at interna-

tional level and influence the sector dialogue; their profile is enhanced through the Swiss Water Partnership (SWP).

1.2. Overall scope of the evaluation

Skat Consulting Ltd. has been contracted by SDC to undertake a rapid evaluation of the Consortium at regional and international levels to judge its effectiveness as (1) an efficient mechanism for disbursing SDC funds to meet Swiss policy objectives; (2) a means to create “added value” that strengthens the voice and organisational capacity of the Swiss NGO partners and increases the effectiveness and sustainability of their water interventions. Further areas for improvement are to be identified to inclusion in any continuation of the Consortium beyond 2013. The evaluation was undertaken primarily through semi-structured interviews in Switzerland and in the three regions: West Africa, East Africa and South Asia. Focus of the questions and discussions were on the following areas:

1) General approach of the NGO Consortium:

- Project Selection (appropriateness)?
- Acceleration or substitution?
- Uptake of SDC initiatives?

2) Added value of the NGO Consortium and sustainability:

- Added value and limitations?
- Sustainability and “ownership” of the Consortium approach?

3) Structural aspects of the NGO Consortium:

- Organisational arrangements?
- Financial arrangements?
- Communication mechanisms?
- Monitoring system/s?

1.3. Scope of West Africa evaluation mission

A short mission to Bamako (Mali) was undertaken by Roger Schmid between September 29th and October 5th, 2013, to meet and interview the West Africa Regional Water Advisor of the Consortium as well as available project staff and partners along the focus question areas mentioned above. The overall aim of the assessment was to:

- Evaluate the positive and negative effects of the additional SDC funding and the Consortium arrangements (Did the Consortium work? Pros and cons: where did the projects benefit from the consortium and where was the consortium hindering, where was it an additional burden?)
- Investigate on the possible future of such a mechanism (Should SDC invest in the continuation of the Consortium? If yes, what changes would be proposed? What are future expectations from the Consortium? How can this be realised?)

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSION

2.1. Setting the stage

The West Africa region (in terms of the Consortium set-up) encompasses **10 projects implemented by the 8 Consortium-NGOs in 8 different countries** - Madagascar having been added to the region for language reasons. The total budget of the projects amounts to CHF 5'696'206 (or 31% of the total Consortium budget) including the SDC/GPWI total contribution of CHF 3'654'201 (share of 64%). The projects taken together stretch across all beneficiary groups (communities, health centres and schools) and subtopics (water supply, water disinfection, sanitation, hygiene awareness raising and blue schools concept) proposed to be addressed by the Consortium. Five of the projects (red circles below) have benefited of the additional SDC/GPWI Consortium funds released for 2013.

The **Regional Water Advisor (RWA) for West Africa - Jacques Louvat** - is based in Bamako (Mali) as employee of Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation (HSI) and made available to the Consortium for 25% of his working time. In the reminder of his time he occupies a similar function, namely acting as regional technical advisor on WASH for his own organisation.

Country	Organisation	Project	Budget total	DDC
Benin	Helvetas	Approvisionnement en Eau Potable des Ecoles et Centres de Santé (EPECS)	1'065'120	937'305
Chad	Swissaid	Eau potable et de production en zone rurale	398'031	318'425
Guinee	Tdh	Amélioration des conditions en eau, hygiène et assainissement dans les structures de santé des communes de Ratoa et de Dixinn	365'494	292'394
Madagascar	Fastenopfer	Rano Aina	273'498	220'000
Mali	Caritas	Développement économique local par la production irriguée	1'007'999	234'700
Mali	Caritas	Accès à l'irrigation agricole au Plateau Dogon	775'027	202'557
Niger	HEKS	Contribution à l'accès aux infrastructures hydrauliques des communautés en milieu pastoral	641'679	513'343
Niger	Swissaid	Approvisionnement en eau potable et développement des cultures de contre-saison en milieu rural	511'151	408'921
Senegal	Tdh	Projet d'appui en eau, assainissement et hygiène à 20 structures sanitaires du district de Podor (région de Saint-Louis)	396'453	317'162
Togo	SRK	Actions pour la Santé et la Vue - Extension Eau et Assainissement	261'754	209'403
Total		CHF	5'696'206	3'654'210

The West Africa mission set out to exchange with the RWA as well as with Consortium project staff gathered in Bamako (from Tdh Guinea/Senegal, Red-Cross Togo and Caritas Mali), whilst taking the opportunity to make a field visit to one Consortium project situated at reasonable distance from the town (for time and security reasons), namely the project of Caritas Switzerland "Accès à l'irrigation agricole dans la région de Bamako, Mali" implemented by Caritas Bamako. Like this, and taking into account that the RWA could also speak on behalf of his organisation's Consortium project in Benin, the interactions allowed to cover directly 6 projects implemented by 5 organisations within the West Africa portfolio of the Consortium.

2.2. Work schedule / methodology

Date	Activity
Week of 23.09.13	Preparatory works: ♦ Review of Consortium documents (operational plans / rapports) ♦ Elaboration of working methodology / tools with evaluator team ♦ Exchange with Water Policy Advisor of Helvetas
Sun. 29.09.13	Flight Zurich - Bamako (dep. 10 AM, arr. 9 PM)
Mon. 30.09.13	Working session with Regional Water Advisor West Africa Assessment of documents and preparation of working sessions
Tue. 01.10.13	AM: Joint working session with project implementers (Tdh Guinea / Senegal, SRC Togo, Caritas Mali) and Regional Water Advisor PM: Individual working sessions with the project implementers above
Wed. 02.10.13	Field visit to Caritas Mali (Bamako) Consortium project "Développement économique local par la production irriguée"
Thu. 03.10.13	AM: Mission restitution session to Regional Advisor, Caritas Bamako team and Country Director of Helvetas Mali PM: Exchange with the SDC's COOF in Bamako PM: Assessment of working sessions / interviews and reporting
Fri. 04.10.13	AM: Reporting PM: Wrapping-up session with Regional Water Advisor West Africa Night: Flight Bamako – Zurich (dep. 11 PM, arr. 9 AM +1 day)
Tue. 08.10.13	AM: Exchange with Swiss Red Cross (Delegate for Togo) in Bern PM: Reporting

2.3. People contacted

During the Mali mission	
Jacques Louvat (Helvetas)	Regional Water Advisor, Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium; Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Mali Office
Sarr Mohamed Moustapha (Terre des hommes)	Project Manager Water, Hygiene and Sanitation, Terre des homes (until Aug. 2013 responsible for the Consortium projects in Guinea/Senegal, now based in Mali)
Mamadou Diarra (Caritas Switzerland)	Representative of Caritas Switzerland in Mali, based in Bamako
Ferdinand Sissoko (Caritas Mali)	Project Manager Caritas Mali based in Bamako
Magloire Dako (Caritas Mali)	Project Manager Caritas Mali based in Bamako
Noël Koadjo Yandi (Togolese Red-Cross)	Coordinator for the Central Region of the Togolese Red-Cross, based in Sokodé, Togo

Mayor and his communal councillors / staff	Commune rurale de Yélékébougou (cercle de Kati, région de Koulikoro)
Traditional chiefs, village committees and villagers	Village de Koba (commune de Yélékébougou)
Marcel Stössel (SDC Mali)	Directeur Suppléant, Bureau de la coopération Suisse au Mali, Bamako
Hamet Cissé (SDC Mali)	Chargé de Programme Développement Rural, Bureau de la coopération Suisse au Mali, Bamako
Pierre-Yves Suter (Helvetas)	Country Director, Swiss Water & Sanitation NGO Consortium; Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Mali Office
In Switzerland / from the desk	
Agnès Montangero (Helvetas)	Water Policy Advisor, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, headquarters Zurich
Hyacinthe Atobian (Swiss Red-Cross Togo)	Chargé de Programme, Délégation du Togo, Croix-Rouge Suisse

2.4. Project visited

Caritas Switzerland: “Accès à l'irrigation agricole dans la région de Bamako, Mali”, implemented by Caritas Bamako

Budget (CHF)	2011	2012	2013	Total
Requested amount (SDC)	117'250	117'250	0	234'500
Own contribution	400'039	367'964	5'496	773'499 (77%)
Total	517'289	485'215	5'496	1'007'999
No of people with improved access to water supply	-			
No of people with improved access to sanitation	Hygiene promotion: 8'656 (4'448 women / 4'208 men)			
No of people with improved access to small-scale irrigation	8'656 (4'448 women / 4'208 men)			

Mali is a Sahelian country subject to recurrent food insecurity. Caritas Switzerland engages since more than 35 years in agricultural development and drinking water provision in the country. The organisation is one of the main partners of Caritas Bamako since it established in 2000 its technical and financial partnership with the latter. Since, Caritas Bamako has established a renowned expertise in the management and development of water resources.

The **project being part of the Consortium** started in 2010 and evolves within the triennial self-promotion programmes 2010-2012 / 2013-2015 (promotion of economic initiatives, food security and sustainable management of natural resources) of Caritas Bamako. The area of intervention are the circles of Kolokani and Kati (region of Koulikoro, within a radius of ~250 km around Bamako) with an annual rainfall of up to 600 mm. The objective of the project is to enhance the living conditions and to increase the food security of the rural population in the

area through improved access to water for production. To reach this, the project supports the realisation of water infrastructures and the cultivation of land (construction of small dams, establishment of production perimeters for arboriculture / market gardening, strengthening of technical and organizational capacities, counselling on production and marketing), whilst promoting hygiene in the community and schools. The main expected outputs are that:

- 3 new dams are constructed and 4 existing dams rehabilitated, all effectively managed by village-level committees;
- 2 new production perimeters are established and their management is ensured
- 31 villages have a functional organisation promoting sustainable agricultural techniques and 30% of the producers have adopted them
- 8 villages have developed an action plan for hygiene promotion at community and school level

The results and effects achieved by the project per September 2013 are summarized below. Based on this, it can be concluded that the expected results have been met – and exceeded - in the overall, whilst the hygiene promotion activities remain to be finished in one village.

Résultats obtenus - aménagements

- 3 petits barrages réalisés et 4 autres réhabilités
- Réalisation du périmètre d'arboriculture de Guihoyo
- Amélioration de l'accès à l'eau pour 9'789 personnes
- 109.78 ha avec maîtrise partielle de l'eau pour l'agriculture et exploitable en toute saison
- 79% des superficies sont exploitées
- Diversification agricole (riziculture, maraîchage, arboriculture, pêche, abreuvement des animaux)
- Amélioration de la disponibilité alimentaire (riz, légumes, fruits, poissons)
- Amélioration des revenus des exploitants maraîchers

Effets - aménagements

- Recharge de la nappe phréatique (non-tarissement des puits)
- Sécurisation alimentaire et nutritionnelle des ménages (disponibilité, diversité et qualité des aliments)
- Réduction de l'érosion
- Réduction de la corvée d'eau pour les femmes
- Autonomisation financière des femmes (maraîchères)
- Réduction des maladies hydriques
- Restauration de la biodiversité (animale, végétale)
- Renforcement de la cohésion sociale autour des ouvrages (foncier rural local, espaces aménagés)

Résultats obtenus – promotion hygiène

- 237 personnes dont 120 femmes de 7 villages sont sensibilisées à l'hygiène et l'assainissement
- Des consignes d'hygiène et d'assainissement appliquées systématiquement (nettoyage des concessions et des places publiques villageoises, la protection de tous les aliments et eaux de boisson)
- 240 élèves et 8 enseignants formés en 2012 et 472 élèves et 13 enseignants en 2013 formés au CHAST, participant à la sensibilisation des populations sur l'hygiène et l'assainissement
- La thématique hygiène et assainissement est prise en compte dans le programme de Caritas Bamako et les agents se sont appropriés les outils

Effets – promotion hygiène

- Perspectives d'amélioration du cadre de vie dans les villages (nettoyage systématique des habitats)
- Changement de comportement dans la gestion des ordures ménagères
- Réduction de l'incidence des maladies d'insalubrité (diarrhée, paludisme etc.)
- Renforcement des économies familiales (diminution des dépenses de santé)
- Renforcement de la cohésion sociale (nettoyage collectif des places publiques villageoises)

The **field visit** allowed to get an impression of the project's intervention in the **village of Koba** (commune rurale de Yélékébougou, cercle de Kati, région de Koulikoro) where a dam of 130 m length for a design flow of 96 m³/s has been constructed (civil works ended in May 2013). The costs of the infrastructure amount to 47'073'000 FCFA, including the local (communal) contribution of 7'829'000 FCFA (or 16.6%). The villagers provided their contribution in the form of (unpaid) labour and local material (stone blocks and gravel). Next to its function of water resources management and environmental protection, the dam has created 48 hec-

tares with high agricultural potential (20 hectares for rice cultivation, 10 hectares for market gardening and 18 ha for arboriculture). Dam management is ensured at village level by the:

- The village authorities handling landholding issues, managing disputes and providing guidance on the measures to be undertaken;
- The surveillance committee put in place by the project in a participatory approach. This body is responsible for the daily management (operation and maintenance) of the dam as well as for the supervision of the land use and environmental protection measures.

During the field visit, interactions with the major (and his communal councillors) of Yélékébougou, the local authorities and villagers (in particular the surveillance committee) as well as with the regional director of the rural engineering service (ministry of agriculture) having designed and sited the dam, could be held. The rapid assessment allows concluding that the:

- Dam project is highly relevant for the villagers (a priority enshrined in the “Plan de Développement Economique, Social et Culturel” of Yélékébougou), bears an important agricultural potential in a dry area and has already produced its first effects (groundwater level increase, restoration of natural vegetation and start of market gardening);
- Project is very well anchored at the level of local actors (authorities, villagers). The realisation of this dam has been planned by the commune about 5 years ago and the mayoralty has facilitated the realisation of the project through all the different steps of negotiation, mobilization, implementation and putting in place the management structures. The mobilisation efforts included also horizontal exchange visits of the villagers to other villages have similar water management infrastructures;
- Construction, as led by a contractor with the help of his team of professionals and unqualified labour provided by the villagers, is of very good quality. The first dam overflows show the functionality of the infrastructure and haven't caused any damages;
- Management structures (village authorities and surveillance committee) ensuring the operation, maintenance and use of the dam are effectively in place and operational. The decision and implementation of dam closing at the appropriate moment went smooth;
- Hygiene and health awareness promotion activities (e.g. related to water quality issues and possible increase of malaria exposure) have yet to be implemented in the village.

Further information about the performance of the project and its approach in general, as well as regarding the specific intervention in Koba village are compiled in annex 1.



Newly constructed dam in Koba village



Newly constructed dam in Koba village

2.5. Other projects

The presence of project managers of Tdh Guinea/Senegal and the Red-Cross Togo during the mission allowed to exchange with them on their respective Consortium interventions. The related project information presented at the joint working session is provided in Annex 2 (SRC Togo) and Annex 3 (Tdh Guinea/Senegal).

3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1. General approach of the Consortium

3.1.1 Project selection

The **criteria and procedures for selecting projects** to be included in the portfolio of the Consortium can be considered **adequate and didn't cause any difficulties** at the level of the project managers/promoters. They all have been to a good extent involved in the selection process and in defining the budgets to be proposed to the Consortium. This wasn't the case however for the Regional Water Advisor who was not yet in his position when the Consortium constitution process and programming was conducted.

As depicted below, the projects in West Africa taken together stretch **across all target groups** (communities, health centres and schools) **and subtopics** (water supply, water disinfection, sanitation, hygiene awareness raising and blue schools concept) proposed to be addressed by the Consortium. The **dark blue fields** highlight the main subtopic focus of the specific projects in terms of intervention and related expected beneficiaries (see numbers), whereas the **light blue colour** indicates subtopics addressed with lower intensity.

Theme	Communities					Health Centres			Schools			Entry
	Wat.	Dis.	San.	Awa.	Irr.	Wat.	Dis.	San.	Wat.	San.	Blue	
Benin <i>Helvetas</i>	11'000			10'000		120'000	120'000		4'000		2'400	WASH in HF
Guinée <i>Tdh</i>						262'000	262'000	262'000				Health
Madagascar <i>Fastenopfer</i>	10'000			10'000	5'000							WASH
Mali – Bam. <i>Caritas</i>				13'000	8'000							WfF
Mali - Mopti <i>Caritas</i>				33'000	3'500							WfF
Niger <i>HEKS</i>	4'000			4'000								WASH
Niger <i>Swissaid</i>	10'100			10'100	250							WASH
Sénégal <i>Tdh</i>						55'596	55'596	55'596				Health
Tchad <i>Swissaid</i>	10'040			10'040	425							WASH
Togo <i>Croix Rouge</i>		51'000	56'000	56'000					13'200	13'200		Health
Beneficiaries	45'140	51'000	56'000	146'140	17'175	437'596	437'596	317'596	17'200	13'200	2'400	

Wat. = Water Supply

San. = Sanitation

Awa. = Awareness raising on hygiene

Dis. = Water Disinfection

Irr. = Irrigation

Blue = Blue Schools

HF = Health Facility

WASH = Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WfF = Water for Food

Beneficiaries = Expected nb. of beneficiaries as announced in the ProDoc / project proposals

For some subtopics – e.g. **water disinfection in communities and the health centre interventions as a whole** – the West Africa portfolio contributes nearly by its own to the expected results of the entire Consortium in terms of beneficiaries. Contrariwise, beneficiaries of community water supplies and hygiene awareness raising, as well as of sanitation in schools in the West Africa region only contribute marginally to the Consortium's overall expected results in terms of beneficiaries. Finally, the **entry points of the projects differ widely**, ranging from classical WASH approaches and WASH in health facilities in particular, to water for food (productive use) and ultimately health sector projects.

All the projects in the West Africa regional portfolio have obviously had a **very good potential to absorb the additional funds** made available and to increase access to WASH and small scale irrigation of rural populations. The Consortium called for existing projects and proposing a financial volume that effectively allowed for scaling-up endeavours. Interested projects have submitted their proposals accordingly. As a matter of fact, the **budgets will be completely absorbed by the end of 2013** (for the different projects as well as for the RWA) and a significant amount of new access could be created in a short time span, be it at the level of communities (WASH and productive use of water) or in health centres. Most of the projects even managed to **exceed the expected results in terms of beneficiaries**, partly for reasons of efficiency and partly due to the favourable evolution of the exchange rate experienced. According to the project managers/promoters they would indeed select and propose the same projects to the Consortium if they would have to start from scratch.

In the overall, a **critical mass of projects for an effective exchange on themes and approaches is gathered** in the West Africa regional portfolio – even though this wasn't considered a key criterion in project selection. Although some topics are confined to basically one organisation in one country (such as productive use of water in the Caritas projects in Mali or sanitation infrastructure at community level in the SRC project in Togo), there was still sufficient content-wise and/or approach-wise overlap with the potential for synergies and joint learning. The geographic spread of the individual projects is definitely a factor that limited bilateral physical exchanges (upcoming between HIS Benin and SRC Togo however) and made regional face-to-face events becoming financial and logistical very heavy.

A **stronger geographical concentration of the interventions in the West Africa portfolio** of a Consortium II would certainly lead to more efficient and effective exchanges, although this might potentially exclude smaller NGOs not having any projects in the refocused region. Opening up the exchanges to the other regions of the Consortium (or even work with a thematic clustering) and broadening through this the thematic experiences base to tap in, hits in the case of the West Africa projects (French speaking context) mainly the linguistic, but also contextual and cultural barriers. Hence, in order to become an even more productive pool for synergies, complementarities and joint advancement, it is desirable to have a **West Africa regional portfolio with a higher number of projects across the different subtopics** (e.g. also regarding productive use of water) **or a limited thematic focus of 1-2 target groups and/or range of subtopics** in a next stage of the Consortium.

3.1.2 Acceleration or substitution

Seen their **different entry points**, ranging from classical WASH approaches and WASH in health facilities in particular, to water for food (productive use) and ultimately health sector interventions, the West Africa Consortium projects have also **different modes of investing the funds** received towards project acceleration. Typically for:

- **Guinea/Senegal (Tdh):** Introduction of a minimum WASH package into the approach of existing mother/child health-nutrition projects. The **additional WASH component** was introduced by an additional staff (with RWA support) that recently phased out of the project (expertise transferred to existing country level Tdh staff). The new health-nutrition-WASH package is now a standard of Tdh and will be applied also beyond (and outside) the Consortium I.

Project	Entry point	Mode of acceleration
Benin <i>Helvetas</i>	WASH in Health Centres	Replication
Guinée <i>Tdh</i>	Health	Additional WASH component
Madagascar <i>Fastenopfer</i>	WASH	Replication
Mali – Bam. <i>Caritas</i>	Water for Production	Boosting + additional WASH component
Mali - Mopti <i>Caritas</i>	Water for Production	Boosting + additional WASH component
Niger <i>HEKS</i>	WASH	Replication
Niger <i>Swissaid</i>	WASH	Replication
Sénégal <i>Tdh</i>	Health	Additional WASH component
Tchad <i>Swissaid</i>	WASH	Replication
Togo <i>Red Cross</i>	Health	Additional WASH component

- **Togo (SRC):** Introduction of an **additional WASH component** into existing community health projects. This new component has been developed by the existing project staff, with a strong support of the RWA. The implementation of the WASH component has required the mobilisation of additional volunteers at community level. The extended intervention is now a standard of the SRC in Togo and is expected to be applied also beyond (and outside) the Consortium I.
- **Mali (Caritas):** The Consortium funds of Caritas Switzerland allowed Caritas Bamako to realise **additional irrigation infrastructure investments** (boosting) which were already planned but for which no funding could be raised so far. Insofar, no additional human resources had to be engaged to absorb the Consortium funds. For the Caritas Mopti project, the additional funds allowed to substantially **scale up the interventions**, having led also to a temporary reinforcement of the local staff. For both projects, an **additional WASH component limited to hygiene awareness raising**, based on the PHAST (community) and CHAST (schools) tools, has been added after a training of the Mali staff during the West Africa Regional Workshop in March 2012.
- **Benin (Helvetas):** Typical **scaling-up of the interventions** within an existing WASH project focussing on health centres and schools. The scaling-up was achieved with the existing human resources of the project and has led to an overload of the staff as well as a postponement of parts of the intervention into the 2nd part of 2013. Yet the Consortium funds disbursement and expected results will be achieved at the end of the year.
- **Niger (Swissaid/HEKS), Chad (Swissaid), Madagascar (Fastenopfer):** Replication and scaling-up of interventions within existing projects.

From the above it can be concluded that the SDC/GPWI contribution to the Consortium has effectively led to an **acceleration of / or expansion into WASH and Water for Food activities without substitution of funds**. Further, in the cases of project expansions from the health sector into the water sector, the **enlarged package is expected to be implemented also beyond (and outside) the Consortium I**. No negative impacts from the acceleration can be reported, and no mayor additional human resources have been engaged specifically for the Consortium project implementation that could not be maintained by the organisations.

3.1.3 Uptake of SDC initiatives/approaches

A series of **approaches and methodologies, new for the project staff/managers of the region, were introduced** during the Regional Consortium Workshop of March 2012 in Bamako, most prominently the Blue Schools concept, CLTS and relation with CHAST/PHAST, participatory documentation, sustainability assessment, outcome mapping and information market. They were then effectively applied in the projects needing new approaches, concepts and methods, mainly in those introducing an additional WASH component in their intervention strategy. Whilst the Blue Schools concept was from the outset proposed to be applied by HIS Benin project, **other SDC approaches/initiatives were neither imposed nor explicitly built into the interventions** of the project / organisation. Hence, there was not extra burden created, but rather new dynamics in projects having not yet their consolidated strategy in WASH.

3.2. Added value and sustainability

3.2.1 Value added and limitations

As developed in the chapter “acceleration or substitution”, the SDC Consortium funding effectively allowed to:

- **Add successfully a WASH component in major existing health projects** (e.g. Tdh Senegal/Guinea in Health Centres, SRC in communities) and **water for production projects** (e.g. Caritas Mali)

or/and

- **Scale-up significantly major existing WASH interventions** (e.g. Helvetas Benin in Health Centres; Fastenopfer Madagascar, Swissaid Niger/Chad and HEKS Niger in communities) and **water or production projects** (e.g. Caritas Mali).

Beyond the immediate project effects, **added value** in the sense of **information sharing, synergies, complementarities and joint learning/advancement** could be achieved at different levels. The most pertinent examples are as follows:

- **At the level of projects/organisations:**
 - Tdh in Guinea/Senegal has strengthened its competencies on sustainable building and management of WASH infrastructures in health facilities through joint developments with the RWA on tendering process and specifications, working with management committees / users' associations and on sustainability assessments. Also, an excellent experience base regarding WASH in health facilities has been established, which allows now the organisation to document and capitalize on;
 - Red Cross in Togo has, with the support of the RWA, strengthened its competencies in tendering, supervision, utilisation of Ecosan by-products, definition of appropriate output/outcome indicators and in internal self-assessment. The support of the RWA also led to the successful introduction of the CLTS approach, VIP latrines (SanPlat) and the WATA disinfection technology.
- **At the national level:**
 - Tdh in Guinea/Senegal could raise its profile in the countries through exchanges at practical/field level with other NGOs (WASH cluster), having led to a rapprochement with UNICEF;

- Red Cross in Togo could raise its profile in the national water sector and is now officially recognized (by the Ministry of Water, Ministry of Health and UNICEF) as an organisation implementing the CLTS approach in Togo;
- Caritas Switzerland trained is implementing partners of Caritas Mali on the PHAST /CHAST approach which was then successfully applied to introduce the WASH component into the Consortium projects focussing on productive use of water.
- **At bilateral level:**
 - Information exchange between Tdh in Guinea/Senegal and Helvetas in Benin on the realisation of awareness raising material (posters);
 - Project visit of the Red Cross in Togo to Helvetas in Benin on WASH in health centres and schools foreseen in November 2013.
- **At regional level (West Africa):**
 - Information sharing as well as joint learning and action planning at the Regional Consortium Workshop of March 18-22, 2012 in Bamako, Mali, attended by participants from all Consortium projects apart from Swissaid Niger (see annex 5). The jointly developed action plan was implemented very limited only however;
 - Online information sharing through the (still rather hesitant) use of the electronic platform.
- **At global level:**
 - The practical experiences of Tdh Guinea/Senegal and SRC Togo have significantly nourished the SDC RéseAU / Health Network e-discussion on “WASH in Health Facilities” of late 2012, whilst both organisations and their projects could benefit widely from the knowledge exchanged by the other participants of the discussion.

Hence, the **changes were primarily brought in by the RWA** and are now reflected in the projects' improvements **within the fields of technologies, processes/approaches, communication and project management**. In the overall, it is possible to distinguish between **three types of projects** in the West Africa portfolio in relation to their engagement into exchanges and the related effects:

- 1) **Projects which profited considerably from the Consortium approach to enhance their pertinence** – SRC Togo, Tdh Senegal/Guinea and HIS Benin: These projects have regularly requested the support of the RWA resulting in significant improvements of the quality of their approaches, activities and results. This was made possible to frequent provision of information/documentation, assessment of reports and strategic orientations provided by the RWA, mainly during field missions and partly as distant desk support. Typically these are mainly the projects which had set out to add a WASH component in their major existing health projects or had already such an integrated approach.
- 2) **Projects which profited limitedly from the Consortium approach to get inspired** – Swissaid Niger/Chad, Fastenopfer Madagascar and Caritas Mali-Mopti: These projects have taken up and applied some information and tools provided essentially by the RWA (e.g. guide on public tendering and specific questions). In general, the approaches and interventions of those projects have been influenced marginally only by the expertise and knowledge gathered within the Consortium, mainly because they dealt with scaling-up their proven projects and felt entry point-wise and subtopic-wise isolated from the others.

- 3) **Projects which interacted limitedly only with the Consortium constituents** - Caritas Mali/Bamako and HEKS Niger: Like all the other projects, they had the opportunity to present themselves and to liaise with the other projects / the RWA during the Regional Workshop in Bamako. Despite this opportunity and the engagements made in Bamako, the exchange didn't continue, and therefore the projects didn't profit of the Consortium. Reportedly, even at the level of the two Niger projects, there was no specific collaboration between the Swissaid and HEKS team, working both on rather classical approaches for water supply at community level, but in opposite regions within the country.

Next to the challenge of the projects to effectively see the engagement into exchanges as a win-win situation and to adopt an appropriate learning attitude, the **time factor was highlighted as an important hindering factor**. In general, the additional workload that was going to be created by the additional Consortium funds was not really taken into account in the project proposals. Once the operations started, some teams found themselves overwhelmed. Under these circumstances it was a challenge for the people to link with other projects for sharing knowledge and engaging into collaborations.

Hence, the future project proposals should take into account the strive for synergies (introduce actions and indicators in project design) and the potential additional workload for absorbing the funds, as well as the measures to be taken in terms of team building.

3.2.2 Sustainability and “ownership” of the Consortium approach

The mainly RWA-driven sharing of experiences and the new approaches applied in some projects - in particular SRC Togo, Tdh Senegal/Guinea and Helvetas Benin - after the training received in the Regional Workshop in Bamako has **led to more holistic concepts, the application of best practices and ultimately expectedly increase sustainably** of those interventions. **Exchange and shared activities are planned to be continued** beyond and outside the Consortium I by the projects/organisations above which have profited considerably from the current Consortium approach and potentialities to enhance their pertinence. More generally, the **projects in the West Africa portfolio will continue beyond 2013 also outside a Consortium programme**, as all of them existed before and didn't mobilize major additional internal human resources. Most of them will however have to reduce the infrastructure investment part of their interventions unless other funding sources can be tapped. An exception is the project of Tdh in Senegal which is in the process of pulling out of the country by end of 2013.

Due to the geographical spread and the local level focus of the projects (and the Consortium ProDoc as a whole), **the portfolio of West Africa projects/NGOs has not lead to effective policy influencing** by approaching governments and other national stakeholders as a Consortium. Reportedly all interventions are fully aligned with the respective national policies and strategies, whilst aiming at contributing to the achievement of the government targets and plans in their respective domains – the latter being considered as the key priority and function of their interventions. In that sense, the feeling of belonging to a consortium mainly occurred during the Regional Workshop in Bamako and the exchanges / collaboration with the RWA, but the **Consortium approach wasn't part of the projects' communications at local or national level**. For the reasons mentioned above, a **shared corporate identity of the Consortium isn't considered at regional level as an additional relevant added value** in the current or a future Consortium.

3.3. Structural aspects

3.3.1 Organisational arrangements

From the regional point of view, the **Consortium structure can be rated as appropriate and well-functioning**. The set-up proposed in the offer of the Consortium is considered excellent: the PMU, the RWA, regional meetings and the online platform are particularly well thought through and could be renewed in a next phase. However, although the Consortium approach was clearly developed in the offer, it was insufficiently shared with the projects under preparation. This is valid equally for the drive towards establishing synergies and for the table of monitoring indicators which came up only once the project had already started.

The **geographic clustering** of the Consortium projects, supported by a Regional Water Advisor, is highly relevant from the West Africa region perspective due to the prevailing linguistic (French speaking), contextual (similar development challenges and processes), cultural (ethnic similarities across the countries) and logistics (difficult to travel to other regions) aspects. Ultimately also all the Consortium NGOs themselves are organized per regions, and not thematically. A national (country-level) coordination of projects would not have added value for the current project portfolio, as the 10 projects implemented by the 8 Consortium-NGOs in the region are situated in 8 different countries. Only in Niger two Consortium projects are implemented by different organisations in the same country, whereas in Mali two other projects are conducted in the same country - but by one and the same organisation. To reach an influential force at country-level regarding national sector policy and development, **situating additional projects in a same country** would be desirable in a Consortium II, although not being a priority for the current Consortium projects/organisation

The **role/offer of the Regional Water Advisor** (not defined in detail in the Consortium Pro-Doc) was communicated by the latter to all projects at the outset of the operations (see annex 4). The concept shared foresaw, based on a 25%-position, three main modalities of RWA intervention as **distant desk support and in-situ missions**, namely:

- 1) At the request of the projects (according to needs/problems encountered during project implementation)
- 2) Continuously (during project monitoring/reporting through regular exchanges)
- 3) In anticipation (development of tools, sharing of information, specific exchanges, tailor-made trainings, etc.).

However, for most of the project people, the role of the RWA became **explicit and accessible during the Regional Consortium Workshop only** and henceforth started to ask for his services (information sharing, introduction of tools and concepts, in-situ appraisals, etc.). Beforehand there was a clear hesitance to exchange virtually with the RWA they didn't know personally and they considered having rather a control function. Also, the RWA didn't have any means of leverage (such as a hierarchical role or a logframe including "regional results") for becoming more directive. The requests of the projects have ultimately led to **various missions and field visits of the RWA over the past year**: Mali (several times), Togo 2x, Senegal 2x, Guinea 1x, Benin 1x.

The regret was generally expressed by the projects that they haven't profited earlier already from the **great knowledge and services available at the RWA level** – a type of resource person not easily available within their organisations/networks prior to the Consortium. Hence, an even **more proactive role** awarded to this function in the future would be benefi-

cial, including a **jointly developed work plan for the RWA** with periodic project visits/trainings, bilateral project gatherings in the presence of the RWA, more frequent regional workshops as well as for triggering the documentation and dissemination of good practices.

3.3.2 Financial arrangements

To foster stronger exchanges, synergies and added value of the Consortium, the **budgets and logical frameworks of the individual projects should provide for exchanges** at bilateral (between projects) and regional (among all projects) level - this wasn't the case in the current proposals - as well as **for buying in the services of the RWA**. The latter funds should not replace the knowledge management budget managed at PMU level which includes the regular functioning of the RWA position.

Due to the geographical spread of the projects, the Consortium **didn't lead to cost or time benefits** regarding logistics (e.g. coordinating procurement, sharing transports) or human resources. **Competition between Consortium partners and projects occurred mainly in positive terms** only (stimulation of best performance), whereas the distribution of additional funds made available by SDC/GPWI in late 2012, hence defining the attribution criteria, was the only noted moment of difficulties in that sense.

3.3.3 Communication mechanisms

The "moment fort" and most appreciated mechanism in information sharing and joint learning (through exchange of experiences and thematic training) was the **Regional Consortium Workshop of March 2012** in Bamako, Mali. Having such an event earlier on in the Consortium operations would have been beneficial, but many projects indeed started to get into routine implementation of the specific projects towards the end of 2011 only. A 2nd such an event early 2013 would have been very much appreciated and topical, but didn't occur mainly due to reasons of project staff availabilities (peak of project implementation) and budget. Next to the regional f2f event, most productive communication and exchange took place during the **in-situ visits of the RWA** (missions to Togo, Senegal, Guinea and Benin) responding to demands of the projects. Beyond this, regular regional and bilateral communication and **exchange by e-mail** (primarily initiated by the RWA) took place.

The **web based platform** was hardly used by the project staff (e.g. no uploads in 2013) and limitedly employed by the RWA. The main reasons for not having tapped much more the potential of the platform are internet connectivity problems, complexity of the platform use and unfamiliarity/inexperience with the effective use of such type of tools. In order to trigger more the potential of the platform, its **use and connectivity requirements should be made easier and facilitated**, whereas the **information made available has to be highly relevant** to the needs of the projects (such as documentations and best practices) and being not available elsewhere already.

Communication with SDC at the country level didn't take place so far for most of the projects in the West Africa Region, apart from the projects of HEKS and Swissaid in Niger and Chad which reportedly exchanges with the respective Swiss Cooperation Offices (SCO). The deficiency of interaction is partly due to the absence of the water topic in some SDC country strategies (e.g. Mali, Benin, and Madagascar) in the region (no incentive and common ground for exchange), to the absence of SDC in some countries of Consortium projects (e.g. Senegal, Togo) and to some NGOs' attitude to expect and wait that SCO people con-

tact them. In any case, in the future there should be a **proactive approach from both sides to engage in information sharing and experience exchange.**

3.3.4 Monitoring system(s)

Albeit for all organisations their (partially adapted) project monitoring systems allow to inform well the specific reporting requirements of the Consortium, **quarterly progress reporting on the Consortium projects has created an important additional workload** for the project. Since most projects anyway have to report to various donors and levels on a 6 months basis, it is recommended to limit the Consortium reporting to the essential, e.g. only half-yearly (instead of quarterly) reports and yearly operational plans (instead of quarterly).

The Consortium approach was clearly developed in the offer, but insufficiently shared with the projects under preparation. This is valid equally for the drive towards establishing synergies and for the table of monitoring indicators which came up only once the project had already started. Hence, the Consortium conceptualisation should in the future provide for synergies and RWA involvement in the individual project designs/proposals, **whilst defining the table of results indicators, including indicators measuring the synergies and joint learning, from the outset.**

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CONSORTIUM II

Main issues in Consortium I	Recommendations for Consortium II
A critical mass of projects for an effective exchange, synergies and joint learning on themes and approaches is generally gathered in the current West Africa regional portfolio, although some topics are confined to basically one organisation in one country. Opening up the exchanges to the other regions (or even work with a thematic clustering) and broadening like this the thematic experiences base to tap in, hits in the West Africa case mainly the linguistic, but also contextual and cultural barriers.	In order to become an even more productive pool for synergies, complementarities and joint advancement, it is desirable to have a West Africa regional portfolio with a higher number of projects across the different subtopics (e.g. also regarding productive use of water) or a limited thematic focus of 1-2 target groups (among communities, schools and health centres) and/or range of subtopics (water supply, sanitation, water disinfection, irrigation).
The geographic spread of the individual projects limited bilateral physical exchanges and made regional face-to-face events becoming financial and logistical very heavy. For the same reason, Consortium didn't lead to cost or time benefits regarding logistics (e.g. coordinating procurement, sharing transports) or human resources.	A stronger geographical concentration of the interventions in the West Africa portfolio would certainly lead to more efficient and effective exchanges, although this might potentially exclude smaller NGOs not having any projects in the refocused region.
Joint advocacy at national level didn't occur, as only in Niger two projects are implemented by different organisations in the same country, whereas in Mali two other projects are conducted in the same country - but by one and the same organisation.	To reach an influential force at country-level regarding national sector policy and development, situating additional projects in a same country would be desirable, although not being a priority for the current Consortium projects/organisation
Next to the challenge of the projects to effectively see the engagement into exchanges as a win-win situation and to adopt a learning attitude, the time issue was as an important hindering factor. The additional workload created by the Consortium funds was not really taken into account in the proposals. Under all these circumstances it was a challenge for the people to link with other projects for sharing knowledge and engaging into collaborations.	The future project proposals should take into account the strive for exchanges, synergies and joint learning (introduce actions and indicators in project design) as well as the potential additional workload for absorbing the funds with measures to be taken in terms of team building.
Communication with SDC at the country level didn't take place so far for most of the projects in the West Africa Region,	In the future there should be a proactive approach from both the NGOs and SDC / SCO sides to engage in information sharing and experience exchange.

Main issues in Consortium I	Recommendations for Consortium II
From the regional point of view, the Consortium structure can be rated as appropriate and well-functioning. Although the Consortium approach was clearly developed in the offer, it was insufficiently shared with the projects under preparation. This is valid equally for the drive towards establishing synergies and for the table of monitoring indicators which came up only once the project had already started.	The Consortium structure could be repeated in a next phase: the PMU, the RWA, regional meetings and the online platform. The Consortium conceptualisation should however in the future provide for synergies and Regional Water Advisor involvement in the individual project designs/proposals, whilst defining the table of results indicators, including indicators measuring the synergies and joint learning, from the outset.
The web based platform was hardly used by the project staff and limitedly employed by the RWA. The main reasons for not having tapped much more the potential of the platform are internet connectivity problems, complexity of the platform use and unfamiliarity/inexperience with the effective use of such type of tools.	In order to trigger more the potential of the platform, its use and connectivity requirements should be made easier and facilitated, whereas the information made available has to be highly relevant to the needs of the projects (such as documentations and best practices) and being not available elsewhere already.
For most of the project people, the role of the Regional Water Advisor became explicit and accessible during the Regional Consortium Workshop only and henceforth started to ask for his services. Also, the RWA didn't have any means of leverage (such as a hierarchical role or a logframe including "regional results") for becoming more directive. The regret was generally expressed by the projects that they haven't profited earlier already from the great knowledge and services available at the RWA level – a type of resource person not easily available within their organisations / networks prior to the Consortium.	An more proactive role awarded to the RWA in the future would be beneficial, including a jointly developed work plan for the RWA with periodic project visits/trainings, bilateral project gatherings in the presence of the RWA, more frequent regional workshops as well as for triggering the documentation and dissemination of good practices. The budgets and logframes of the individual projects should provide for exchanges at bilateral (between projects) and regional (among all projects) level, as well as for buying in the services of the RWA. This should not replace the knowledge management budget managed at PMU level which includes the regular functioning of the RWA position.